United Nations A/C.3/61/SR.7

General Assembly
Sixty-first session

Official Records

Distr.: General
20 October 2006

Original: English

Third Committee

Summary record of the 7th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 5 October 2006, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Rashkov (Vice-Chairman) ..... (Belarus)

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* Items which the Committee has decided to consider together.

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06-55487 (E)

In the absence of Mr. Al Bayati (Iraq), Mr. Rashkov (Belarus), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 98: Crime prevention and criminal justice (*continued*) (A/61/96, A/61/135, A/61/178, A/61/179, A/61/284, A/C.3/61/L.2 and A/C.3/61/L.3)

Agenda item 99: International drug control (*continued*) (A/61/208-S/2006/598 and A/61/221)

1. **Mr. Bazel** (Afghanistan) said that he welcomed the assistance of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and its Executive Director in helping the Afghan Government, and the Ministry of Counter Narcotics in particular, to formulate strategic directions and mobilize resources to address the problems of drug production and trafficking. Afghanistan was fighting narcotics and terrorism through a combination of law enforcement and economic measures. Article 7 of its Constitution placed the Government under the obligation of preventing the production and trafficking of narcotic drugs.

2. In January 2006, the London Conference on Afghanistan had adopted the Afghanistan Compact, an agreement between the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the international community which identified three critical and interdependent areas of activity for the five years following its adoption: security; governance, rule of law and human rights; and economic and social development. The fight against narcotics was a threat to national, regional and international security at all levels, and to the development and good governance of the country. That fight was also an important component of Afghanistan's National Development Strategy, adopted at the London Conference. Its National Drug Control Strategy, launched in January 2006, outlined eight pillars for combating and eradicating the illicit narcotic trade in Afghanistan: alternative livelihoods; building institutions; information campaigns; drug law enforcement; criminal justice; eradication programmes; drug demand reduction and treatment of addicts; and regional cooperation.

3. Findings from a UNODC survey on opium trends in Afghanistan had revealed an increase in opium production in 2006, considered to be caused by extreme poverty, economic reasons, drought and pressure from traffickers and local criminal groups. In that regard, farmers were the weakest links in the drug chain, and appropriated only a fraction of the illicit drug income. After 24 years of conflict, poverty remained overwhelming in the country. Since opium was a main cash crop in villages, it needed to be replaced by legitimate sources of income. Therefore, alternative livelihood projects needed to be created to strengthen the Government's credibility and reduce the risk of humanitarian crisis. In that regard, development assistance from the international community was vital. Demand reduction in drug-consuming countries was needed, as was a long-term commitment for a comprehensive development strategy.

4. Since Afghanistan was a landlocked country, traffickers transported drugs through its neighbouring countries and other transit States to European markets. In that regard, strong border control enforcement measures and mutual cooperation among judicial and law enforcement authorities of those countries would greatly contribute to the fight against narcotic drugs. He welcomed the recent Ministerial Conference on Drug Trafficking Routes from Afghanistan, held in Moscow in June 2006, which had pointed out the need to help Afghanistan implement its National Development Strategy, to meet the benchmarks set out in the Afghanistan Compact, and strengthen cooperation between Afghanistan and neighbouring countries so as to establish a modern and effective border management system, as had been decided at the Doha I and II Conferences, on Regional Police Cooperation in May 2004 and Border Management in Afghanistan in February 2006, respectively. His country had also hosted a regional conference in Kabul on countering narcotics trafficking in June 2006.

5. Lastly, his Government had engaged bilaterally with neighbouring countries to strengthen its efforts in fighting against narcotic drugs, and attached great importance to regional and international cooperation to the world's drug problem.

6. **Mr. Kadiri** (Morocco) said that UNODC was the best venue for considering and discussing matters relating to transnational organized crime and corruption issues within the United Nations system. Morocco would continue to cooperate with UNODC to better align its legislation with the Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Convention against Corruption in order to enhance possibilities for technical assistance, training and information sharing with the Office.

7. Morocco would soon submit the Convention against Corruption to its parliament for ratification. It was currently harmonizing its national legislation with the Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and attached particular importance to its Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, given the country's geographical location and the humanitarian crisis arising from the unprecedented inflow of migrants of recent years. In facing the issue of migration, dialogue needed to be established between countries of origin, transit and destination in order to undertake concerted action and identify global solutions to the problem, on the basis of shared responsibility and in a spirit of partnership. The Rabat Declaration adopted at the Ministerial Euro-African Conference on Migration and Development held in July 2006 marked a new approach in international cooperation with regard to illegal migration, by linking it to the need for development.

8. Morocco had taken a series of measures to address the dangers and damaging effects of drug trafficking and abuse, such as through its draft national strategy against drugs, which was in line with United Nations recommendations. The global fight against drugs was a shared responsibility and required a comprehensive and balanced approach. Alternative development policies were important in fighting illicit cultivation and poverty and marginalization. The globalization of threats linked to drug trafficking had made it crucial to strengthen international cooperation and technical assistance in the prevention and fight against terrorism. Morocco was committed to active support of the actions of the international community, within the United Nations framework, to prevent and fight against those dangers.

9. His country had signed and ratified most of the conventions on combating terrorism, in compliance with Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), and continued to campaign for the speedy adoption of the convention on international terrorism. The global fight against terrorism was intrinsically dependent on success of the fight against crime and corruption. Government strategies and institutional responses undertaken individually or collectively were essential for effectively reducing transnational organized crime. In the fight against terrorism and other forms of transnational organized crime, Morocco had long attached great importance to the establishment of a relevant mutual legal assistance mechanism and to requests for extradition, and would continue to fully cooperate in that regard.

10.. **Mr. Bin Haji Haron** (Malaysia) said that Malaysia remained particularly concerned about transnational crimes such as terrorism, money-laundering, corruption, illicit drug trafficking and trafficking in persons and arms smuggling. As was recognized in the Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, international cooperation needed to be reinforced for national crime prevention to be effective. Exchange of information, capacity-building, mutual legal assistance and joint investigations were needed among countries. Malaysia fully supported actions and measures to combat transnational crime at all levels and strongly believed that international cooperation in sharing information and intelligence and in analysing the effects and danger of crimes on society needed to be enhanced.

11. While much emphasis had been placed on regional and multilateral efforts to combat transnational crime, bilateral cooperation between neighbours on issues of mutual concern and interest was also an important and effective means to address that serious and growing problem. At the regional level, Malaysia was committed to accelerating implementation of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Plan of Action to Combat Transnational Crime. It was constantly reviewing its national laws as appropriate, and adopting stringent measures when necessary, to combat and respond to the changing nature and growing complexity of crimes.

12. The Terrorism Preventive Branch of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime played an important role in providing technical assistance to countries to help them to strengthen their counter-terrorism capacities. Malaysia was a State party to five of the twelve international conventions and protocols on counter-terrorism, and was in the process of acceding to the remaining seven. On a regional level, it had cooperated in the context of ASEAN, which was drawing up a convention on counter-terrorism, in measures to enhance counter-terrorism cooperation.

13. Coordinated international action and greater harmonization of criminal justice systems were needed in efforts to curtail the very serious threat of money-laundering, a matter that was detrimental to Malaysia's economy and security. Malaysia continued to cooperate with international partners in strengthening measures

to combat money-laundering and the financing of terrorism, and was reviewing its legislative and administrative measures so as to be able to accede to the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. It was also taking such measures to ratify the Convention against Corruption, since adopting punitive and preventive means to combat corruption was a top priority of the Malaysian Government.

14. The control of illicit drug trafficking was best carried out bilaterally and regionally and international support and cooperation were vital in that regard. Malaysia had consistently called for stringent measures to be adopted to curb such trafficking, and compliance by law enforcement authorities had helped to suppress the trafficking of drugs into the country. It was drawing up a strategic national plan to ensure a drug-free generation by 2023. Malaysia acknowledged the important work done by UNODC and had benefited directly from its assistance, particularly in capacity-building programmes.

15. **Mr. Basnet** (Nepal) said that his Government attached great importance to the work of UNODC, and commended its technical cooperation programme. Transnational organized crime threatened international peace, security and development, caused massive loss of life and property, and threatened the fabric of civilized society across the world. Such crimes not only disrupted the efforts of Member States in the area of development, peace and justice, but also misguided young people towards crime. Though intended to promote international economic growth and development, globalization had helped criminals expand their networks worldwide. In that regard, Nepal was committed to working with other States in order to defeat the activities of transnational organized criminal groups.

16. His Government was also committed to combating corruption, which seriously affected development efforts in developing countries by eating up their resources and undermining their stability. At the national level, his Government had launched an anti-corruption drive and empowered national institutions to take severe action against corruption. Good governance was one of the four pillars of the current five-year national development plan. As a party to the Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others and its Final Protocol of 1950, Nepal condemned all forms of trafficking and called on the international community to protect the victims of trafficking by providing them with shelter, helping them return home and treating them humanely.

17. Nepal was also concerned about the serious threat of narcotic drugs to public health, safety and the well-being of people, particularly young people. As a party to international drug control treaties, including the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Convention on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, Nepal emphasized the need for demand reduction, supply control, prevention and treatment, and called on the international community and the United Nations to continue to provide financial and technical assistance to complement national counter-narcotics efforts.

18. His Government also reiterated its utmost resolve to combat terrorism at all levels. In that regard, Nepal had extended its cooperation to the Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee and the UNODC Terrorism Prevention Branch and had submitted reports to the Committees concerned on the implementation of the relevant resolutions. Nepal was already a party to over half a dozen international anti-terrorism instruments. Least developed countries needed adequate financial and technical assistance to complement national endeavours towards preventing transnational organized crime. Lastly, his delegation urged the international community to extend its support to the least developed countries in order to strengthen national institutional capacity and regulatory frameworks and to join hands to defeat the social evils crippling national development efforts.

19. **Mr. Adekanye** (Nigeria) said that an integrated, comprehensive and broad-based approach was necessary to counter the various threats posed by drugs, transnational crimes and terrorism. His delegation was concerned by the increasing use of Africa for the trans-shipment of cocaine and heroin to Europe. To counter such a dangerous trend, which had stretched Nigeria's human and technical capabilities, national law enforcement agencies had redoubled their vigilance at all the borders, and efforts had been made to upgrade security at entry ports.

20. The escalation of organized crime, including drug trafficking, money-laundering, human trafficking, kidnapping and terrorism, was a matter of serious concern to his Government. Nigeria, in collaboration

with members of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and development partners, had conducted joint operations which had improved the exchange of intelligence and cross-border operations mechanisms within the West African subregion. The project had also led to two multinational international drug enforcement operations, which had resulted in the seizure of huge quantities of drugs.

21. To complement those efforts, Nigeria had focused attention on training as a critical component in the fight against drug trafficking and related crimes and had established an international training centre in collaboration with UNODC. Closely connected with training was capacity development, for which many African countries did not have the necessary resources. His delegation therefore called on the international community to assist developing countries in the critical areas of capacity-building and human resource development. Another area of concern to his Government was the spread of synthetic drugs. Although there was no significant trafficking in such drugs in the region, it was important to act swiftly to prevent Africa from turning into a trans-shipment point or source of illegal production.

22. Nigeria was a party to all the United Nations drug control conventions. It had strict import and export controls on drugs for legitimate medical and scientific purposes. His Government also considered the forfeiture of assets to be an effective drug enforcement tool and had made the forfeiture of the property of drug offenders an integral part of its drug control efforts. Furthermore, the criminal justice system had been streamlined and strengthened to address the issue. His Government had also intensified its preventive and drug demand reduction efforts, including public awareness campaigns; the establishment of drug abuse committees at all levels of government; drug abuse education; and the rehabilitation of drug dependent persons.

23. During the general debate, his Government had reiterated its grave concern at the increasing threat of violence and insecurity in the world brought about by threats or acts of terrorism. Nigeria strongly condemned terrorism in all its manifestations and called on the international community to redouble its efforts in order to defeat terrorism worldwide. His country would also continue to support bilateral and multilateral efforts to reduce trafficking in persons. As trafficking in persons was a transnational crime requiring collaboration with countries of origin, destination and transit, his Government had signed a memorandum of understanding with countries in the subregion and Europe and was exploring the possibility of entering into similar arrangements with other countries. Its internal legal mechanisms had been strengthened through the enactment of national legislation which criminalized the trafficking in persons and imposed severe penalties on offenders.

24. Money-laundering continued to engage the attention of the Nigerian Government. His Government had put in place appropriate structures to address the threat, which included strengthening the country's financial investigation capacity and banking oversight. It had also sought to increase awareness among banks and non-bank financial institutions about international money regulations as well as reporting standards as a means of discouraging money-laundering activities. Its efforts to counter money-laundering activities, however, required assistance from its development partners. Lastly, Nigeria reaffirmed its commitment to crime prevention, criminal justice and drug control and expressed its readiness to work closely with Member States, the United Nations system and other stakeholders in those areas.

25. **Mr. Xhaferraj** (Albania) said that, in preparing its national development strategy, Albania was working to ensure the promotion of the Millennium Development Goals in accordance with the parameters for accession to the European Union. Development also involved working to foster good governance, transparency and reform, including dismantling corruption and fighting organized crime and trafficking. Recently, over 35 major criminal organizations had been the object of a crackdown. Their members had been brought to justice and assets had been confiscated. As a result, according to data from organizations dedicated to combating organized crime, illegal trafficking routes had moved outside Albania.

26. Priorities of the Albanian Government included cutting the ties between organized crime and politics and combating corruption. Thanks to new administrative and ethical standards in public administration and various laws, corruption had fallen significantly. Tax evasion and smuggling had been greatly reduced, and public revenue from customs and taxation had increased by 32 per cent compared to the

same period the previous year, due to improved management practices.

27. **Mr. Margarian** (Armenia) said that after gaining independence in 1991 the Republic of Armenia had experienced social chaos and conflict, which had destroyed the judicial system and led to an increase in drug use and crime. In response, Armenia had acceded to all the United Nations conventions on drug trafficking, drugs, psychotropic substances and precursors and had undertaken a number of initiatives to create and develop anti-drug policies and activities. Armenia was not a drug-producing country, and local drug consumption was very low. However, for geographic reasons, Armenia had the potential to become a transit country.

28. Since 2003, a law on drugs and psychotropic substances had been in effect and the criminal code had been revised to incorporate relevant provisions of the main international instruments. There had been a shift away from the punitive approach of the Soviet era to a more balanced approach which encompassed issues of illegal trafficking in drugs, drug abuse prevention and State support for drug rehabilitation.

29. Changes were being introduced into the way that health statistics were gathered, in order to improve the quality of epidemiological data. The main data collection point would be at the National Institute of Health of Armenia, with support provided by a network of statistical services in the capital and 10 other regions.

30. With the participation of NGOs and international institutions, the Government of Armenia was involved in the Southern Caucasus Anti-Drug Program, which engaged in institutional capacity-building in three countries in the South Caucasus to prevent and combat drug trafficking and drug abuse. Armenia had achieved multilateral cooperation and signed bilateral agreements in the fight against transnational organized crime and international terrorism and worked closely with such organizations as the Council of Europe, the European Union, the Commonwealth of Independent States, NATO and various United Nations agencies in the areas of legal reform, improvement of national law enforcement capacities, border control and intelligence.

31. **Ms. Borjas Chávez** (El Salvador) said that her delegation looked forward to the UNODC annual report on Latin America and the Caribbean, which would help her Government formulate appropriate measures to combat crime in the region. Drugs were a serious threat to the rule of law as well as national and international security. Combating illicit drugs required a comprehensive, coordinated and balance response. Her Government led a campaign against drug abuse in such areas as education, health care and public safety.

32. El Salvador's national policies to combat drug abuse and drug trafficking took into account the relevant international legal instruments. It had been updating its national legislation to include the diversion of chemical precursors as a crime under the law and had also taken significant steps to ensure access to treatment for drug addicts. Given that drug problems were not limited to any specific State, international cooperation was essential. There was a need for effective bilateral and multilateral networks to strengthen cooperation and assistance in legal areas and in the exchange of information. Drug abuse also had a tremendous impact on individuals and society and led to such phenomena as common crime, organized crime, money-laundering, trafficking in persons and terrorism, among others.

33. She drew particular attention to the issue of gangs, which in El Salvador involved not only exclusion and social marginalization but also organized crime. Drug trafficking and organized crime flourished in situations where the law was not effectively enforced and where corruption prevailed. It was therefore essential to protect the independence of the judiciary. El Salvador hoped that the first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption and the third session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime would be productive.

34. Her Government was committed to the implementation of the relevant international agreements on drug demand reduction and drug control, including the Political Declaration on Global Drug Control adopted at the twentieth special session of the General Assembly, and had recently enacted counter-terrorism legislation to meet its international obligations. Lastly, El Salvador reiterated its commitment to cooperating in international efforts to prevent crime, including all forms of transnational organized crime, corruption and terrorism.

35. **Mr. Belinga-Eboutou** (Cameroon) said that corruption was one of the worst crimes in society, and

could be harmful to peace and security, caused underdevelopment and poverty and weakened national institutions. The President of Cameroon had taken an unequivocal position against corruption, pointing out the incompatibility between efforts to combat poverty and the outrageous illegal enrichment of certain individuals. The national anti-corruption policy involved strengthening regulations, institutionalizing control mechanisms and punishing economic crimes.

36. Cameroon had ratified the United Nations Convention against Corruption in 2004, and the country's penal code contained provisions punishing corruption and economic crimes. A recently adopted law required public servants to declare their property and assets at the beginning and again at the end of their term of service, as part of the effort to fight corruption. His Government of Cameroon had established a number of bodies to prevent and combat corruption, including a parliamentary committee on national governance, a body whose task it was to ensure transparency and public finance management, a national financial investigation agency and an independent national anti-corruption commission which was directly under the President.

37. Disciplinary measures included dismissal from office. A thorough list of such disciplinary procedure was available for those who were interested. It was also important to make choices about the type of society to have in a given country. Democracies and open societies were more likely to respect ethics. Accordingly, it was necessary to attack the problem at its root through education, promoting integrity and ethical behaviour.

38. **Mr. Ramadan** (Lebanon) said that, in 1998, Lebanon had revised its drug-control law to include provisions concerning money-laundering. Lebanon had a zero tolerance policy with regard to drugs and had adopted a clear stance as defined by the Minister of Health. The national plan was based on three pillars: supply reduction, demand reduction and treatment. Regarding supply reduction, in 2002 the authorities had destroyed 120 million square metres of cocaine, but cultivation had re-emerged in 2002 owing to the critical situation of Lebanese farmers. Lebanon had reduced drug trafficking and also cooperated with Interpol. Large quantities of cocaine had been seized at Beirut International Airport. In 2002, the Executive-Director of UNODC had said that Lebanon was one of the countries that had launched durable crop-elimination programmes.

39. Where demand reduction was concerned, public awareness programmes and workshops were held in schools and universities, as well as in cooperation with the media. Regarding treatment, new legislation defined drug addiction as a disease rather than a crime, which meant that patients could be hospitalized rather than imprisoned. A 2001 law punished money-laundering as a crime. He called for increased international cooperation, since Lebanon received no aid from donor countries to enable it fully to implement its national plan.

40. Lebanon, which had long been a victim of State terrorism, as manifested by Israel's occupation of the country, had ratified 11 of the international legal instruments relating to the prevention and suppression of international terrorism. His country had a Drug Control Office, attached to the Ministry of the Interior, which actively cooperated with the Arab Office for Narcotic Affairs, regularly attended meetings of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and actively fulfilled its UNODC reporting commitments. It had also played an active part in the Demand Reduction Forum held in Abu Dhabi in 1997.

41. **Mr. Dall'oglio** (International Organization for Migration (IOM)) said that in the globalization era keeping the crucial balance between protecting the human rights of migrants and crime prevention was a delicate task. Where migration was concerned, trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants were the most widespread offences of criminal networks. Accordingly, IOM had been encouraged by the increase in ratifications of the two Protocols to the Convention against Transnational Organized Crime on smuggling and trafficking. However, the implementation gap remained and every day brought reminders that trafficking and smuggling continued to produce humanitarian crises in many parts of the world, such as the Mediterranean and North African region. IOM had stepped up its technical cooperation to help national authorities in managing Europe-bound migration flows from Africa and Asia through the Maghreb countries.

42. Advances in migration management technology, including the use of biometrics in travel document system, had been moving forward in the most developed countries and could be instrumental in

combating abuses in the migration sector. However, IOM was concerned that access to such technology was uneven, owing to the costs and the technical sophistication needed to support it. That imbalance had created a potential gap in cooperation among States to combat transnational organized crime, and IOM had stepped up its technical assistance to poorer States to enable them to integrate that technology. That was an issue that should be seriously addressed in all programmes dealing with crime prevention and criminal justice.

43. Trafficking in persons should be tackled, first and foremost, from a human rights rather than a law enforcement perspective. That meant addressing its root causes, such as poverty and gender inequality, which would be a long-term exercise. Meanwhile, the best way of protecting the rights of actual and potential victims would be an effective criminal justice system that deterred traffickers. Since the best evidence against traffickers was the testimony of the victims, a victim-centred approach that encouraged the trust of the trafficked person would give law enforcement officials in developing Member States the best chance of bringing traffickers to justice and justice to their victims. Training manuals and training of trainers for law enforcement officials on trafficking and smuggling now existed for certain countries. In that regard, there was a need for improved cooperation among criminal justice systems in source and destination countries, notably in mutual legal assistance.

44. IOM fully supported efforts to maximize the impact of capacity-building programmes through operational partnerships. It was working closely with UNODC and other partners to synergize the provision of technical assistance to its Member States and actively participated in the UNODC initiative for coordination mechanisms. An example of inter-agency cooperation mechanisms was the Global Migration Group, to which IOM and UNODC both belonged.

45. **Mr. Murata** (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)) said that the work of FAO on alternative development, a fundamental part of the global counter-narcotics strategy, was carried out in close cooperation with a number of international and national bodies in joint ventures in which partners' resources were pooled, providing a more cost-effective and coordinated approach to local eradication and control efforts, and the resilience needed when development programmes could take more than a generation to come to fruition.

46. A European Union-funded project, on which FAO was working with the German Technical Cooperation Agency with an investment of 200,000 euros, was updating and improving the concept of "alternative development" for rural communities locked into the illicit drug trade. The project would help States achieve the poverty- and hunger-eradication targets of the Millennium Development Goals, afford environmental sustainability, combat disease and help establish global partnerships.

47. FAO projects undertaken with other partners included an agro-forestry project in Bolivia, which had destroyed 14,000 hectares of coca over a six-year period; an agro-livelihood project in Afghanistan, launched in 2005 and aimed at reducing areas of opium poppy cultivation in four regions over the next three years; and other successful joint ventures with the Governments of Myanmar, Cambodia, Thailand, Lebanon and Colombia.

48. **Mr. Kersten** (International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol)) said that with its 186 member countries, Interpol was the world's largest police organization and facilitated cross-border police cooperation and assisted all relevant organizations, authorities and services. It operated six regional offices, an Office at United Nations Headquarters, and a National Central Bureau in each member country, which served as the contact points for Interpol assistance.

49. Interpol had three core functions in the fight against transnational crime. The first was to provide secure global police services: its global police communications system, linking 185 member countries, in addition to 25 remote sites, enabled police to carry out secure communications worldwide. The second was the operational data services and databases for police, which covered key data regarding criminals, wanted persons, fingerprints, photographs, DNA profiles and stolen or lost documents. It also provided research and analysis on crime trends. The third was operational police support services, in which specialized working groups brought together experts from around the world to develop and promote best practices and training in investigation techniques and analysis in its five priority crime areas of drugs and organized crime; financial and high-tech crime;

fugitives; public safety and terrorism; and trafficking in human beings. Other areas included corruption and environmental crime.

50. Interpol was, thus, able to develop the law enforcement community's capacity to fight transnational crime and terrorism, with the result that member countries achieved hundreds of arrests and extraditions, as well as drug seizures, recovery of stolen goods and the rescue of child-abuse victims. Interpol was currently seeking extrabudgetary resources for the establishment in Vienna of its non-profit Anti-Corruption Academy to serve as the most innovative provider of anti-corruption education, training and technical assistance in the world. It would also assist Interpol member countries with their implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption. He stressed Interpol's growing cooperation with the United Nations and other regional organizations. His organization looked forward to further developing its cooperation with UNODC, based on the principle of comparative advantage.

51. **Mr. Ramadan** (Lebanon), speaking in exercise of the right of reply to the statement made by Israel at a previous meeting, said that Israeli delegates had attempted to politicize the problem of drugs when all other Member States were trying to find constructive solutions to it. Although his delegation had not intended to reply to the statement by the Israeli delegation, it felt compelled to do so to refute that country's baseless allegations. With respect to its reference to Hizbollah, that movement had not existed before the first Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1978 or the second invasion in 1982. Hizbollah was a popular resistance movement which had arisen solely in response to the Israeli occupation of Lebanese lands.

52. According to a 2003 United States State Department report, Israel was at the centre of international trafficking in Ecstasy. One example involved a notorious mob called the Arizona Ring which, according to the *New York Times*, had purchased Ecstasy pills from a man named Ilan Zarger, a drug supplier based in Brooklyn who had ties to the Israeli mob. According to United States Drug Enforcement Administration agents, Israelis had been involved in almost all of the major arrests for trafficking in Ecstasy. They were veterans, a New York narcotics agent reportedly said. Some had served in elite and intelligence units and knew all the tricks of surveillance and counter-surveillance. They were, therefore, very hard to catch.

53. Although Israel had long been known for its oranges and leather sandals, its current main trade included the virtual monopoly on the global trafficking in Ecstasy, which, along with marijuana, hashish, heroin, and cocaine, was currently heavily used and traded in Israel. Contemporary Israel was an affluent, drug-consuming country with an estimated 300,000 casual drug users and some 20,000 junkies. There were no reliable statistics on Ecstasy use in Israel. In 2000 alone, however, police had confiscated 270,000 Ecstasy tablets and, according to an online report by the Israeli authority for combating drugs, Israeli agents had seized more than 80 kilograms of heroin, 30 kilograms of hashish, 8,885 kilograms of marijuana, and nearly 8,000 sheets of LSD. Those numbers added up to serious drug problems, especially among Israeli youth, and had led to commando-style raids in the tree-lined residential neighbourhoods of Jerusalem, Haifa, and Tel Aviv.

The meeting rose at 5.10 p.m.